



Chapter 2

FROM CANDLES TO COMPUTERS

September 28, 1987

Dear Ranger,

I want to thank you for letting us see the dam and for showing us how it works . . . Thank you also for taking us on the wonderful hiking trail. It was fun and very interesting to learn the different types of trees. I just wanted to say thank you.

God bless you.

Pam Holloway¹

Summer, 1972. The Tulsa District made a rare and important exception to its prohibition against vehicles on the nature trails that abound at many of its projects.

The reason? Little girls — specifically, Brownies, the youngest Girl Scouts — were hiking on the Oologah Lake nature trails, guided by volunteer Owen A. Thomas of the Corps' General Engineering Section.

"One of the most enthusiastic little girls on the hike was a Brownie in a vehicle: a wheel chair," Thomas said later. "She made the entire journey with the help of her Brownie friends who vied with each other for turns at helping guide the chair over the rough spots."²

Thus it goes, day in and day out, in the story of the Tulsa District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

People helping people,
volunteering, exploring, building,
setting a firm hand to the wheel when needed,
lighting black nights,
bringing sunshine into dark days.
The quiet joy of a fall day in the woods.
The sparkle of a sunset on the lake.
The drip from an irrigation pipe on black earth,
the hum of power wheeling from the dam to a hospital.
Thus it goes, day in and day out:
steady, dependable, uncompromisingly friendly.
And thus it has gone for 50 years.

The Tulsa District is people. Left, Boy Scouts built a footbridge at Keystone Lake. And the District's "mom and pop" policy put people like Vick and Mitzi Will in the booth as gate attendants at an area lake.

